

4/23/2019

Presentation at Tenth Anniversary Celebration

I am Jerry Hartman, President of the Barbara McDowell Foundation. Thank you for joining with me in this tenth anniversary celebration of the Foundation.

I started the Foundation in the Spring of 2009 after Barbara's death from brain cancer on January 2, 2009, with the assistance of my then law firm, Drinker Biddle, where I had been a partner for many years until I retired in February 2017. I had one goal which was to honor and maintain Barbara's memory by perpetuating her social justice activism.

Barbara believed deeply that the underprivileged and indigent members of American society, often living in abject poverty, should receive legal representation in their fight for

equal rights in all aspects of American life, including housing, voting, access to public accommodation, and education so as to free from discrimination based on their color, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and physical and mental abilities that precluded them from the enjoyment and access to their fundamental civil liberties.

Barbara's goal of social justice permeated her whole life as evidenced in her political activism beginning with her work on George McGovern's presidential campaign; her political support for Barack Obama; her work at her church, the Westmoreland United Church of Christ, where she chaired its social justice and outreach committee; her presidency of the inner city organization in the Shaw area called the Shaw Community Ministry with its support for area children and housing; the Shaw college scholarship program for that area's high school

students; and finally the Legal Aid Society of the District of Columbia where she headed its first Appellate Advocacy Project and argued many cases in the local District of Columbia courts in numerous substantive areas including domestic violence, housing, and access to benefits.

Her life mission was built upon an incredible legal pedigree which included Yale Law School, federal clerkships, including one with Justice White, her law firm partnership at Jones Day, and her eight years of service in the Solicitor General's Office of the United States Justice Department where she argued 18 Supreme Court cases, including the very rare occurrence of two on the same day.

All the foregoing says too little about Barbara's vision for America that guided her personal beliefs and her life's work

that led to the formation of Barbara's Foundation. As Barbara expressed it to me, echoing the same words of Lyra McKee, the Northern Ireland journalist recently murdered, Barbara saw the poor in America, like the poor in Northern Ireland, having a "poverty of vision" and a "poverty of ambition." Much, much too often Barbara believed mainstream Americans cast a blind eye on their fellow Americans living in squalor who wanted nothing more than the same equal opportunity enjoyed by so many privileged Americans. Barbara strove to vanquish that sad image.

This passion, which fueled the formation of her Foundation, drives its two-prong approach to social justice activism: (1) to make grants to social justice organizations in support of their organization's litigation which has resulted in 45 grants totaling \$1,250,000 in the past 10 years and (2) to

support high impact social justice litigation, coordinating with Drinker Biddle and various social justice organizations, that has led to the filing of some 15 cases. I hope that you will applaud with me Barbara's life work and the work of her Foundation on this tenth anniversary of its founding.

Now let me introduce Patricia Millett, a judge on the United States Court of Appeals of the District of Columbia, who was Barbara's close friend and colleague at the Solicitor General's office.

Judge Millett was appointed to the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit on December 10, 2013. She graduated from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, summa cum laude, in 1985 and from Harvard Law

School, magna cum laude, in 1988. After working in a private law firm (Miller & Chevalier) for two years, she clerked for Judge Thomas Tang of the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. Following her clerkship, she worked for four years on the Appellate Staff of the Civil Division in the United States Department of Justice and for eleven years as an Assistant in the Office of the Solicitor General. In September 2007, she became a leading partner in the Supreme Court and appellate practices at Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP. She has argued 32 cases before the U.S. Supreme Court.

Now let me introduce Kate Jansen:

Kate leads CGRS' effort to fight back against the current Administration's attack on survivors of gender-based violence

and to protect their right to seek asylum, through impact litigation, policy advocacy and public education, and technical assistance and training. Kate served as a legal advisor for the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Washington, DC and in Geneva, and has worked in the San Francisco Asylum Office of USCIS Refugee, Asylum and International Operations Directorate. As a lead expert on asylum issues for the US Commission on International Religious Freedom, she co-wrote their study for Congress on expedited removal, for which she was a co-recipient of the Arthur C. Helton Human Rights Award given by the American Immigration Lawyers Association. She was a member of the American Bar Association's Commission on Immigration Advisory Task Force on Civil Immigration Detention Standards. She is active in the leadership of the American Society of

International Law, serving as co-chair of the International Refugee Law Interest Group.

Now let me introduce Katherine Deabler:

Katharine Deabler-Meadows is a Staff Attorney at the National Center for Law and Economic Justice where she litigates in state federal court and engages in policy advocacy on behalf of low income individuals and communities across the country.

Katharine is especially interested in the intersection of gender and

poverty, and her work focuses on the constitutional rights of public benefits recipients and the workplace rights of low wage workers. Katharine is a graduate of NYU Law, where she served as an Executive Editor of the NYU Journal of Law and Public Policy, and the College of William and Mary. Katharine is one of the NCLEJ attorneys litigating *Robinson et. al. v. NYCTA*, on which NCLEJ and the McDowell Foundation are co-counsel, along with Drinker Biddle and the New Economy Project.

